Legislation for agricultural labourers

972. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state.

(a) whether being upset over Government's failure to enact a Central legislation for agricultural labourers despite several promises, many organisations have decided to launch a nation-wide agitation on the 7th November, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for delay in introducing the Central legislation on agricultural labourers;

(c) whether this delay caused a great resentment among the agricultural labourers; and

(d) if so, by when, this legislation would be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Labour has not received such information. As there are divergent views of the State Governments in the matter of enactment of Central legislation for agricultural workers, therefore such a proposal could not be processed furhter. In view of this, it is difficult to indicate a time-frame in this regard.

Unemployment Allowance for educated unemployed youth

973. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken or proposed to be taken by Government to tackle the problem of growing number of unemployed youths in the country;

(b) whether Government are considering to give "unemployment allowance" to all the educated unemployed youths registered with the Employment Exchanges in the country;

(c) if so, by when it would be implemented; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The Ninth Plan had accorded priority to

agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty. The Plan had focussed on sectors, sub-sectors and technologies which are labour intensive, in regions characterised by higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

The approach to the tenth Plan focusses on providing gainful high quality employment to the additions to the labour force and it is listed as one of the monitorable objectives for the 10th Plan and beyond. The growth strategy of the 10th Plan would lay emphasis on rapid growth of those sectors which are likely to create high quality employment opportunities and deal with the policy constraints which discourage growth of employment. Particular attention would be paid to the policy environment influencing a wide range of economic activities which have a large employment potential.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) The payment of unemployment allowance to all educated unemployed youths would divert substantial resources from developmental programmes to a non-developmental activity. The resources of such a magnitude should better be used for developmental activities, which would generate substantial productive employment. Therefore, the Government is not in favour of payment of unemployment allowance.

Welfare of beedi workers

974. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate any scheme for welfare of beedi workers of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the schemes launched in Gujarat; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) A number of sc'.emes are being run by the Labour Welfare Organisation of the Ministry of Labour in the fields of health, housing, education and recreation for the welfare of beedi workers, under the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1976 throughout the country including Gujarat.